

A SYNAPSE & BRODERBUND PRODUCTION

MIND WHEEL

An Electronic Novel™

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I

THE ARCH-SENATOR

THE FEDERAL ARCH-SENATOR for science, Hay-Seuss Pederson, nudged the French door with his index finger. He had intended to inch cautiously onto the balcony. But now that he had come this far, the roar of the crowd made caution strangely inappropriate. He pushed the door open, and as he advanced two steps to the front of the balcony, the howl of the mob rose like billowing heat, a thunderous blast striking him full in the face.

It reminded him of the sea, but a furious sea. The bodies were indistinguishable at first in the chaotic, frenzied mass that rolled toward the building in waves. It overflowed the sidewalk and tested the fence in front of the Palace of Post-Technological Studies, the screams and chants blending into a single throbbing voice. Inside the walk, a thin line of police clubbed climbers off the fence. TV cameramen jockeyed for position behind the frantic cops. Over the collective voice, one high-pitched wail reached the balcony, a woman's scream that made him search the crowd for the source.

Out of the teeming rabble, he tried to distinguish individuals. Half a dozen protesters in white robes and peaked hoods linked arms in the front and center of the mob. To their right, a bald,

bare-chested savage shook both fists overhead, arms sweaty and gleaming in the sun. A blond executive type, jacket gone and sleeves rolled, cheeks striped with warpaint, was shouting curses. On the left side close to the fence, with a blanket stretched taut as a fireman's net, a team of leather-clad skinheads tossed a body high into the air. The victim, nude but for a pair of bikini briefs, was smeared with paint, fire-engine red, patches of gold glitter shimmering on his arms and legs. Behind the skinheads, farther up the hill, a chanting crew in white turbans and loincloths waved a red banner scrawled with indecipherable black glyphs. Jack-booted, disciplined followers of the dead Generalissimo — "Fascist Revivalists" — spread through the mob in small, efficient squads, evenly-spaced patches of black.

"Death to the Governors" and "Give Us Peace, Give Us Jobs" throbbed from corners of the crowd. A crack like a gunshot sounded from the distant fringes. In a swarming quadrant, arms of protesters thrashing about her like whipping tentacles, stood the source of the scream. Mouth stretched wide, tirelessly emitting an otherworldly shriek, she held a baby at arm's length overhead, the small screams of the child lost in the tumult.

The Arch-Senator for Science thought of old horror films like *Frankenstein*. The villagers came like that, their comedic stomping up the winding path to the castle. Now it was anything but funny, the phalanx of protesters that churned steadily through the middle of the crowd toward the front, toward the Federal Science buildings. Above their heads they carried torches, crude emblems of terror. In the distance, far behind their backs but in the direction from which they had come, separate columns of smoke ascended from the business district.

When he saw the trucks, the Arch-Senator knew that it was a matter of time. How much time depended upon several factors, the actual size of the crowd, for example. The terrain was another, the degree to which it might enhance or inhibit strategic deployment. Were there twenty thousand of them, fifty? A strange time

for such calculations, terrible, in fact. His life was in danger. The quick trip of his own heart and the tightening in his stomach told him that. Still, it was hard not to estimate, with salvation so near in the form of the trucks.

They rolled in from the far edge of the park, stepping easily over the curb from the street, closed at both ends to civilian traffic. They tilted up the slopes, gained the little summits of the hills. Now they were beginning their descent into the flanks of the mob, raising long white arms of tear gas. The Arch-Senator felt a twinge of pity for them, the first victims of the gas who tried to fall back from the choking fog, only to find no place to go, their retreat blocked by the mob that surged and collapsed to a momentum of bodies beyond individual control or supplication.

Still, the olive green trucks were order; the underpinning of whatever remained of reason, a token of what the Arch-Senator's office in government, his place in Science, his destined role meant. It was a matter of time now. Until when? Until next time? When it struck, the sound was like an explosion in the Arch-Senator's own skull.

It had smashed against the stone, one of the wide blocks of granite which, viewed from the walk or the distant street, gave the building the illusion of invincibility. It could have been a water glass but more probably a beer bottle. The only trace it left on the wall was a slightly damp spot not five feet to the left of his head. The object could as easily have been a Molotov or a basement grenade. He backed through the French door and closed and latched it with trembling hands.

He turned and paced mechanically to the center of the office, comforted by the slight cushion of the carpeting. The crowd behind him was muffled but still present, still menacing, like voices in a nightmare he was surfacing from only slowly. He concentrated on regulating his breathing. He was staring blankly at his office door when it opened.

"Excuse me, sir. Your phone." The young man was in a hurry. The Arch-Senator could not recall the last time his aide had entered without knocking.

"What? What about it?"

"I've been trying to put your call through, sir. It's the White House."

He stood for a moment, failing to make connections. From the balcony he had heard nothing inside. The one sound was the blend of the ravenous roar and the insane chanting and the smash that still buzzed together in his ears like the ocean in a dry shell. His aide was glancing nervously at the desk. The red light blinking on the phone was like fingers snapping him out of it. He switched off the conference intercom and snatched the receiver in one motion.

"This is Arch-Senator Pederson. Yes. I concur. Yes, right away. I'm leaving now."

Outside his office, in the corridor, his mind cleared. He decided on the stairs for speed.

On the first floor, he opened the steel door and struck out across the lobby. It was heavily guarded. Inside the glass doors, National Guard troops with automatic rifles had assembled. Through the glass, the Arch-Senator could see the helmeted, masked riot police who had been summoned to block the entrance to the building. Clouds of gas tumbled lazily in the distance.

One young guard in the lobby demanded the Arch-Senator's ID. Where had the kid been for the last three years? He couldn't recognize his own country's Cabinet-Congressional Administrator of Science and Technology. It was another sign of the general breakdown.

"The refusal to negotiate the deployment of interstellar weapons by the Middle Eastern Bloc led to the final abandonment today of the Federated Nations charter." In their coverage of lawless chaos, the Arch-Senator thought, the media seemed

perfectly astute. Above the counter in the little lobby newsstand, a reporter on a suspended TV was speaking in front of the Washington Monument. The rioting throng was visible a very safe distance in the background.

"Of the members remaining in the international body, thirty-six, including the Federated States, voted in favor of dissolution. There were three abstentions.

"News of the F.N. action was met by rioting and demonstrations in Ellay, Nuevo Paris, Warsaw, Feingrad, Cairo, and Lennon City-Tokyo. Here in Capitol City, a crowd estimated by police at seventy thousand have gathered . . ."

The Arch-Senator wanted to turn away, to leave the sordid reportage of events beyond his control. But before he could extricate himself, the morning headlines caught his eye, continuing the assault: LEAK FOUND IN NERVE GAS STOCKPILE in the *Times*; 36% PRIME SPELLS END OF TRADE WITH WEST in the *Post*; TOURIST TORN APART BY WILD DOGS IN TIMES SQUARE in the *Night Echo*.

Even, professional strides carried the official toward the red door marked "Restricted." Immediately upon inserting his badge and descending the short stairs into the underground corridor, the omnipresent, thundering tumult faded. He took a deep breath, crossed toward the polished marble platform, and hailed a transit car.

The Arch-Senator thought that the driver resembled an aging screen star, perhaps Cliff Drivelle. He placed his life in Cliff's hands, closed his eyes, and let the cool air in the tunnel whip past him. The slight, constant whine of the engine was soothing.

He may have been daydreaming or just beginning to dream. He had not yet risen to public office; he was working alone again in the lab on campus, the cool, aseptic smell. The car stopping jerked him awake. A Secret Service agent in an orange smock and sun-sensor glasses led the Arch-Senator through the capacious garage, past a crew of transit car mechanics on strike,

Local #317. The short elevator ride opened on a wide corridor. The agent led him past a field-tripping clot of third-graders and scurrying congressional pages to the big door.

"I'm not saying nuke the moon, for Chrissake. I'm only saying let's set the timer. If we don't, do you want the consequences on your tail end?" Over-Secretary of Peacekeeping Forces Lowell Cowie, chest carpeted with colored ribbons, leaned over the arm of his wing chair; fuzzy gray sideburns, jaw like a muskellunge, glaring down the occupant of the chair beside him, Interior Secretary Joshuason.

"A crash program of deinstitutionalization could serve just as well," Human Services Henchperson Ed Adler interjected, crossing quickly behind them, blinking nervously. "With all the misdemeanor criminals and ambulatory schizophrenics wandering around, getting interviewed on the tube . . . well, think of the diversion!"

In the corner of the oval office, a TV with no audio showed a mass of hooded, black-robed bodies stamping clouds of dust. Behind them could be seen the pillaged, smoking remnants of a pastel mosque.

"Hello, Hay-Seuss."

"Ms. President." Seated behind the big desk, President Helen Honda raised one hand, motioning for the Arch-Senator to join the Chiefs of Staff. He crossed to a spot beside State Henchperson Spielberg.

"I'm telling you, Miz President, we can't pussyfoot now." Cowie sat back, bit the end of his cigar, and ignited a wooden match with his thumbnail.

"I don't intend to, Lowell," the president replied, rotating a saucer-sized desktop fan in Cowie's direction and turning on the juice. Cigar smoke rippled back over the wing chair. Honda pushed her chair out from the desk, a tight semi-smile gripping one side of her mouth. Her blue eyes and black eyeliner narrowed.

"As we can all agree, the situation has become . . . **problematic**. The chances of . . ." The sudden throbbing of a helicopter drowned her words. The Marine Corps chopper swooped past the office window and banked away above the White House lawn. President Honda's intelligent brow furrowed slightly then relaxed. She continued.

"The chances of total planetary devastation by **interstellar** holocaust, chemical degradation of the biosphere, or photon-emission sterility have reached crisis proportions. It's not this administration's fault—it could have happened to anyone. Nevertheless, none of the responses implemented thus far have proven the least bit effective. Therefore, I've been giving serious thought to your option, Hay."

All eyes in the room turned to the Arch-Senator. He cleared his throat.

"Do you mean the Virgil device, Ms. President?" Cowie raised his eyebrows. Adler was chewing his nails. The president nodded.

"Virgil may be our only hope. Use my phone." She pushed the black telephone toward the Arch-Senator. The president grimaced with the fatalism of immense power. "If this doesn't work," she said, "the next step may be for the Cabinet to report to Human Recycling for voluntary pulping of our collective brain tissue."

The Arch-Senator shuddered. As he dialed the number, he planned what he would say. He waited for the familiar voice of Doctor Virgil. In his ear, the muted rings blended with a distant siren, a wailing which had continued for a long time but which he only noticed now, a sound like a long, plaintive, electronic cry for help.

II

DOCTOR VIRGIL

THE FIRST RINGS could have been hollow chimes from a haunted spire. Artifacts of ivory and chrysolite, swarming markets of the Zanzibar slave trade, the tintinnabulation of bells the size of painted toenails on unveiled dancing girls, tambours and soukh-noises recombined like facets of a kaleidoscope in Doctor Virgil's mind.

In the next moment, in a process like crossing the widening corridor from daydream to attention, he recognized the telephone. As he did, he glimpsed for an instant a fleeting vision that the corridor to the real world was actually a narrowing, after all.

The phone was not at hand. To reach it, he would be forced to cross the room. He balanced his yellow pad on the wide, flowered arm of the old stuffed chair and centered his pen on the pad.

Virgil stood up, with a familiar feeling of regret. He never liked leaving the faded chair with its broad, cradling arms and collapsing cushions, its sagging contours like the aging features of an old friend. The chair faced the window, angled away from the

desk and the telephone on its separate table by the wall. The view out the window across the campus changed little except for the permutations of the seasons: the gently depressed syncline, the student footpaths, the maples with their wide leaves, perfect definers of each spectrum gradient from red to green.

The chair was the starting point. It worked in consort with the window. Virgil's thoughts, the sifting interplay of images and sounds, began in the chair. They danced outward, constantly recombining, through the glass and over the expanse of campus and the traffic of students. Sometimes they would fuse inextricably and vanish, vaporize. Often they would backtrack, split off, braid together again and mutate in the vast waters of silence, the subtle currents of syntax.

At times Virgil had reprimanded himself for the chair, but never in earnest, observing that the battered relic had no place in the office of a scientist, recipient of countless medals, accolades, and the sweet, unspoken esteem of colleagues. The chair occupied a sacred space in the old chamber on the second floor that Virgil called his "upper room," the sanctum removed by a long hall and a flight of stairs from the laboratory. Only in the upper room could Virgil envision truly the image of self-completion he cherished.

Substantial volumes, arcane-looking, many leatherbound, crowded the cherrywood bookcases. A time-polished oriental rug, once part of Eva Fein's study in Vienna, lay on the scarred teak floor. One tall lamp with a green shade stood beside Virgil's desk, but he worked mostly by the natural light from the window, the starting place for his poems. The phone was the only annoyance in the room and thus, he thought, perhaps essential. Virgil stood and watched it. If he waited, it might stop.

He glanced again at the yellow pad, started to read a line. Was he finished? Was the poem only half-complete? It was impossible to tell. He couldn't hear a thing above the stubborn ringing. He crossed the room toward the telephone.

The sound of Hay Pederson's voice jogged Virgil's memory to undergraduate days. They had been a brilliant twosome, the most promising matrix physics majors in the class. They had gone their separate ways, to separate recognitions, but Virgil always sensed that they would remain somehow linked. They had shared not only the past but also the dream that neuro-electronic matrix travel would someday be recognized and accepted. Now, as the Arch-Senator spoke, Virgil was hearing the confirmation of their hopes.

By the end of the call, Doctor Virgil was experiencing waves of elation, fear, and wonder. The crisis had arrived. The destructive, mindless debacle of politics had reached endgame. So much depended now on the device: not merely the justification of neuro-electronic matrix research, or even the vindication of science, but the survival of the very concepts of patient method and humane inquiry — the survival, perhaps, of humanity itself.

So much depended also upon the subject. Previous experiments had resulted in some unfortunate disorientations. Who would the adventurer be? Arch-Senator Pederson would bring the project specifications that afternoon. The subject would arrive the next morning. Pederson would observe the entire event through the one-way panel in the laboratory.

Virgil realized he had no time to lose. If he began diagnostic runs immediately, he could cycle to fully operational by morning. He started toward the door but crossed one last time to the old stuffed chair. He stood behind it and, bending over, peering as he might into a pool slowly clearing to his own reflection, reread the lines he had composed that afternoon:

THE FIGURED WHEEL

... Toys and messages, jokes and zodiacs, tragedies
conceived

From among the dreams of the unemployed and the
pampered,

The listless and the tortured. It is hung with devices
By dead masters who have survived by reducing
themselves magically

To tiny organisms, to wisps of matter, crumbs of soil,
Bits of dry skin, microscopic flakes, which is why
they are called "great,"

In their humility that goes on celebrating the turning
Of the wheel as it rolls unrelentingly over

A cow plodding through car-traffic on a street in Iasi,
And over the haunts of Virgil's mother and father
And wife and children and his sweet self
Which he hereby unwillingly and inexpertly gives up,
because it is

There, figured and pre-figured in the nothing-
transfiguring wheel.*

* From *History of My Heart* by Robert Pinsky. The Ecco Press, New York, 1984.

A long moment passed, and then it was time to close one world and open another. Virgil's thoughts were on the neuro-electronic propulsion device as he crossed the old oriental in the upper room. He stepped into the corridor that led to the laboratory and closed the door.

III

THE MIND ADVENTURER

MY STEPS RESOUND in the empty corridor. Am I twenty paces from the door? Thirty at most? There is still time to turn back. Outside the hall window, a sweet, clear spring morning is unfolding, jays chattering in the maples. They may be the last birds I'll hear for a long time.

Stealing a few seconds at the window, I survey the campus: ivy-clad brick, rolling hills, dappled footpaths among the trees. A trace of mist lingers in the dark, still branches. Somewhere beyond the campus, morning traffic moves on the roads, the steady hum of the city. Is the sound more ominous today? Or is it quite the same as always, the only change in me?

I am here today for a real and urgent reason, for better or worse. Yet it feels anything but real. Where in the elegant campus yard, among the paths or the dark trees or in the moist, sunny air is the confirmation? It may be that beyond these buildings, the common, doomed world still turns on its daily pivot. Where is the sign? Nowhere in this cloistered academy. Nothing special in the dumb rotation of business on the outside. I need acknowledgment, a clear token. Analog. For what? For dreams, the dreams I've had since accepting this mission: the howling,

obscene crowds, marching children with the heads of animals, churning whirlwinds, scales and blood, things beyond imagining. I need a sign.

But the door down the corridor is my only sign now, in this academic sanctuary, or within the disintegrating, oblivious world outside. The door is the crux, my cruel reminder that peaceful appearances deceive. I move again down the quiet corridor. The distance closes slowly to a few steps. Nearly at the door, I feel an alarming dizziness. My vision darkens. The door is being transformed.

An hallucination of a door pulses within the solid rectilinear form. The hallucination wavers, dissolves, and a round redness replaces it, an image like a shield, rotating heavily. On its circumference an outline blazes like a red corona. The circular shield is divided into quadrants and each one holds an image.

In the first quadrant, a faceless multitude gangs the front of a massive stage, where in the cold oval of a white spotlight a broken body twitches. The second quadrant holds a rotating violet swastika, behind it a cobblestone street and the gray walls of some monumental structure, wet and shiny, filmed with red-lit water or with blood. A tilted moon hangs in the third sector among a constellation of books, open and tumbling, the pages fluttering, blue-veined and throbbing like trapped live things. The final, and most haunting of the quadrants contains a gridwork of red and black squares, as of an ancient gaming board, where bizarre, attenuated figures move. Surrounding the gameboard is a profusion of clotted foliage, trained in fantastic shapes. At the end of the board, a stone wall is visible and in the wall, an open door. Beyond the door is some indistinct image, more sense than image, of a natural tumult, like tumbling clouds or ocean, about a single peaceful center, an unmoving hub.

As abruptly as it came, the dizziness subsides. Heartbeat racing in my ears, I begin to regain my senses and my sense of my own perspiring body. A wary step forward and another. Soon I stand

before the laboratory door. A moment's hesitation. I turn the knob and step inside.

"Welcome, you are precisely on time." Doctor Virgil glances at his watch and crosses the room, smiling expectantly. I wait for him, recovering my breath. Although middle-aged, he is well-preserved and reasonably good-looking. Slight spaces between his teeth give him a trustworthy air. Behind him, all about the room, are arranged his tools, the technology to shape my fate: computer monitors glowing phosphorescent green and luminous amber; tape drives as tall as a man, the wide discs executing precise fractional rotations; arrays of electronic dials. What appears to be a master control panel adjoins a hospital bed in the center of the room.

"Please, make yourself comfortable." Doctor Virgil takes my arms and leads me toward the bed. The white sheets are folded and tucked with a military crispness, the head slightly raised. I part a curtain of colored wires hanging like tendrils from the back and sides of a computer suspended above the bed. At the end of each wire, a tiny disc-shaped electrode is attached. I sit on the end of the bed and then recline.

"The sooner we start, the sooner we get home," the doctor grins. He has reason to be pleased. My little experiment may be a victory for him, a promise of great future appropriations. He rolls my sleeve and attaches the first electrode to my wrist. Across the room, in the pink strip above the gray, a mirror panel runs the length of the wall below the ceiling. The doctor applies a cool electrode to my temple. Who could be watching behind the one-way glass?

"Now, by law, I must read to you the authorized description of your situation. I know I have it here somewhere—I saw it a minute ago." Why must he talk like that? At this point, he could concentrate a little more on inspiring my confidence. Virgil rummages through papers on his control panel and returns, uncrumpling an official-looking sheet. He clears his throat and



begins.

"The society of your planet is on the brink of self-destruction. You have been chosen to voyage telepathically back through the past to civilization's germinating moment. Your mission: to bring back THE WHEEL OF WISDOM, a small, mysterious object that contains the secret of your planet's best values.

"Your journey back to the roots of intelligent life must take you through a labyrinth of four linked minds of unusual power. Though these individuals are dead, their thought-patterns have left mighty impressions upon the neuro-electronic matrix into which you will be propelled.

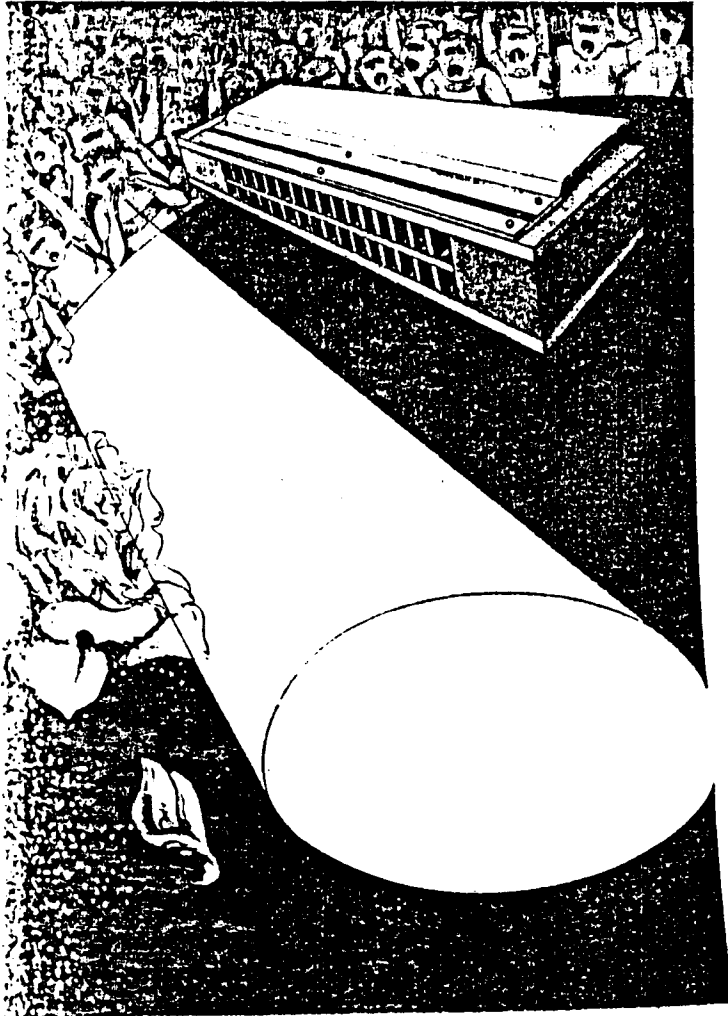
"At the end of your journey, you will confront THE CAVE MASTER, the mysterious prehistoric, apelike being who apparently invented the lever, the flint blade, cave paintings, and the rhythmical group chant. Recently authenticated inscriptions tell of the object—THE WHEEL OF WISDOM—from which THE CAVE MASTER drew his inspiration. This is the object of your quest.

"Only by mastering the journey through each of these minds, and back, can you retrieve the small, mysterious object upon which everything depends. In each mind you will meet helpful guides and challenging adversaries. These encounters will enable you to collect talismans, objects that will be of vital help in your quest. Chance, and your own decisions, will affect your success or failure. If you fail, your society will probably end in horrible destruction. And even if your planet somehow survives, you may be doomed, unable to return to your comatose body.

"Well, that certainly was a mouthful." Virgil returns to his control panel, folds the paper, and slips it absentmindedly into the pocket of his white smock. Already his other hand is creeping toward a red switch on the panel.

"That's right, a few deep breaths now. Okay, you are ready to begin?"

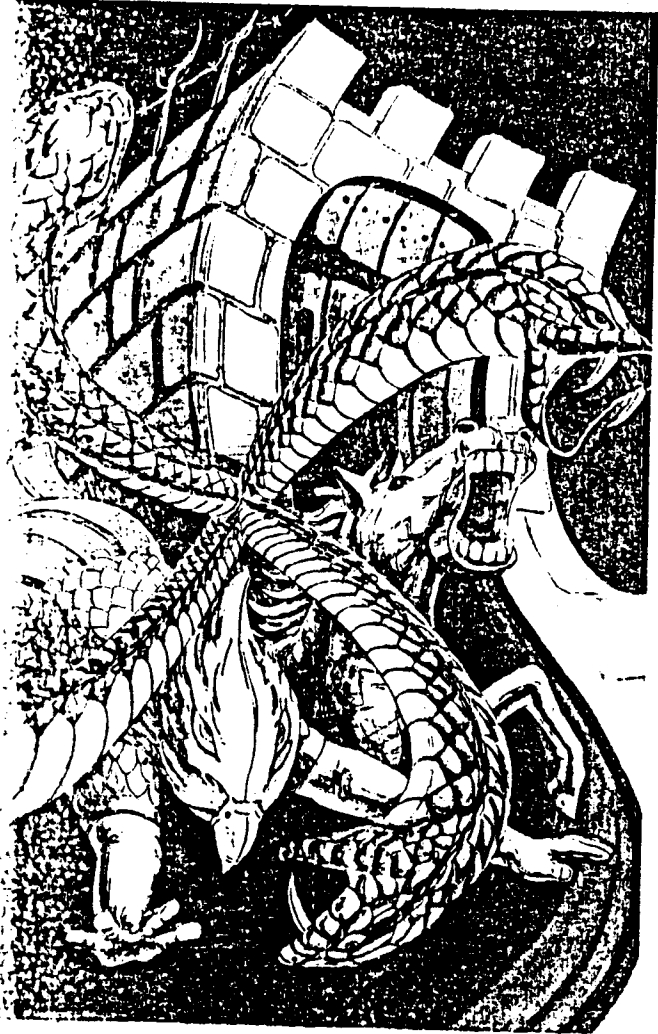
lose your eyes, bizarre, haunting images flutter and
the darkness: a winged woman in bronze armor, a
motorcycle gang, a mournful soldier dropping a
into a fire. They are only shadows of the images
you are about to begin your quest where image and
man and waking are one. Even now the MINDWHEEL
turning . . .



THE MINDS

BOBBY CLEMON, assassinated rock star, once called "half John Lennon and half Janis Joplin." This charismatic, scandalous musician made the anthems of freedom and pleasure for a generation. He was shot by an unknown attacker during an immense protest rally.

Aside from his efforts for peace, Clemon demonstrated an awesome, sometimes capricious political power. For example, before his death he brought about a successful boycott of the Los Angeles Dodgers. The astonishing success of Clemon's "Bring the Bums Back to Brooklyn" campaign was crowned by the exact historical reconstruction of Ebbets Field on its ancient Flatbush site, now part of Central New York.



THE GENERALISSIMO, dictator and war criminal. He was executed for crimes so horrible that it seemed for a time that such hatred and violence had vanished from the world. But incredibly, this monstrous genius now has a considerable posthumous following.

Historians have unearthed and authenticated poems written in his youth by this brutal butcher of millions. Crudely composed and grossly sentimental, these love lyrics, the pathetic croaks of a monster, are addressed to a "Liebchen" said by some to be the General's early schoolmate Eva Fein.



THE POET, passionate, many-minded genius of the Learning and Art Era. He wrote the great "War Trilogy" of poetic dramas, which centuries after his death remain the glory of your planet's literature.

He wrote the plays in hopes of making enough money to marry the young princess he was hired to tutor. Her father, discovering the romance, had The Poet tortured and put to death in the catacombs.



DR. EVA FEIN, "the female Einstein" of the Late Technological Age, honored for earthshaking work on the nature of matter and energy. A schoolmate of The Generalissimo, she fled his regime, then developed the horrible weapons that defeated him—weapons that now threaten the obliteration of all life. Her death-bed message to the world supplied Bobby Clemon with the words of a peace song.

This great scientist and humanist was also a distinguished musician, an extraordinarily gifted and sensitive violinist of professional caliber.

*From SCOTT'S NEW LAYMAN'S
GUIDE TO ADVANCED RESEARCH
(14th edition)*

MATRIX IMMORTALITY. A much discussed but little understood phenomenon on the triple border of microelectronics, aleatory cosmology, and brain studies. The term "immortality" is a popular misnomer.

Few scientific discoveries have produced as much mumbo-jumbo as so-called "matrix immortality." Yet few discoveries hold more promise for humankind.

Early research, prematurely announced, led to a false conception based partly on the inventions of imaginative fiction ("time travel," etc.) and partly on the traditional religious concept of an afterlife.

In fact, the phenomenon (also described as "synaptic echo") is both more mundane, and more consequential for actual human life, than either of these earlier ideas.

The first discovery of infinitesimal yet coherent brainwave patterns, confirming the idea of an alternately expanding and contracting (or so-called "breathing") universe led to much distorted anticipation. An infinitely divisible yet finite universe, made of energy, would theoretically contain an "echo" or integral survival, of any pattern or matrix of impulses. As the universe expands or "exhales," the corresponding contraction "inhales" the complex "echoing" (actually, surviving) pattern.

When these patterns were first detected by hypercomputer-assisted receivers, journalists speculated about such amusing absurdities as talking by telephone with Shakespeare or Darwin, or with one's great-great-grandmother! Leaving such fancies aside, even serious researchers were led to dream of discovering the previously unknown thoughts of departed geniuses. These early mistaken theories had some basis. It was soon known, for example, that the more powerful the mind, the more

le would be the neuro-electronic emanations. also determined that minds did not consist of discourse, nor "thoughts" (in the sense of, say, the prose sentence or the logical proposition). Nor, it turned out, was a mind merely a set of "images."

The data gathered by Fentler and Wolosenko indicates that something more like a terrain. To talk with the dead, or even to visit them, belongs to the realm of imagination or to the mysteries of religion. It is now possible, however, to visit deceased minds and use them, as we use their buildings, works of art, scientific institutions, political institutions. In the somewhat fanciful, yet highly accurate terms of Doctor Virgil: "We cannot speak with the great dead, but we are permitted to visit their dreams!"

If we cannot gather the wisdom of past geniuses, we can wander through the lives of them: their daydreams, nightmares, and fantasies. See also for "COSMOLOGY"; "MIND"; "MIND TRAVEL"; "DOCTOR"; and "WOLOSENKO, IIHOR.") Article by S.

INTERVIEW

BRAINSCAPE TALKS TO DR. VIRGIL

- B:** How did you first conceive of the idea of neuro-electronic matrix travel?
- V:** I first had an inkling of the matrix phenomenon when I was thirteen years old.
- B:** Amazing.
- V:** One summer night I dreamed that I was being pursued by a flock of jack-o'-lanterns behind a bowling alley in my hometown of Leesburg, Virginia. A simplistic analysis might have dismissed the dream as a phenomenon linked to the onset of puberty. Even

Excerpt from interview with Doctor Virgil in Brainscape Magazine, Vol. 25, No. 3.

ver, I intuited a larger significance. Puzzled by the related it the following evening to my companion, edorf, in the back seat of a Plymouth automobile, at ive-In Theater. She inadvertently struck my superior with a tightly packed roll of quarters. At that moment, ved before me, in intricate overlay, sets of dual im- o'-lantern in Martha's head, a bowling lane in a roll a film director of the long-ago twentieth century star- y into a mirror. I knew then that immortality was not med.

ting. But isn't it true that matrix voyages into the of deceased individuals can be treacherous?

we have had a few unfortunate incidents. Three sub- reported a lasting sensation of immersion in a like scrambled eggs. One experienced socially- somnia following weeks of convulsive hiccuping. Tun- as. And some still worse, of course.

you sleep at night, knowing that because of you the s of mighty brains have mutilated your volunteers, ie of them into human avocados?

manity's need to understand itself before it destroys ies such sacrifices.

is it true that some of your volunteers have experienc- ibly lurid and strenuous sexual adventures in these ls"?

afraid that is true.

**** CAUTION ****

The following is an eyewitness account by a writer, Richard Sanford, who volunteered to take a short, relatively safe trip into the brain of Henry Ford.

"Angels in gauzy outfits were gliding about on wheels, inter- changing parts (here's my arm, I catch your eye, everbody gave her a hand), in a kind of break-dancing, Chaplinesque gavotte. They put wheels on my knees and elbows and I soared up a ramp, over a boardwalk, through seas of corn relish, black paint, and blueprints of Edsels. I wandered whimpering, lost, through the engraved whorls and hachures of a dollar bill the size of Dear- born, then stumbled, harrassed by kites, onto the eye on the pyramid's vertex. I fell through the iris and awoke, exhausted and shaken, in Virgil's lab, speaking in tongues, uttering like a refrain the one word 'garage' in languages unknown to me, in accents unheard by anyone in the Western Hemisphere since the time of Gutenberg. Intense!"

MENT FROM
OR VIRGIL'S
BOOKS

Hidden Minds →

? limits to research,
absolutely forbidden:

Edward Teller, William Burroughs,
Haskell Bloome, Jay Cobb,
Henry Youngman

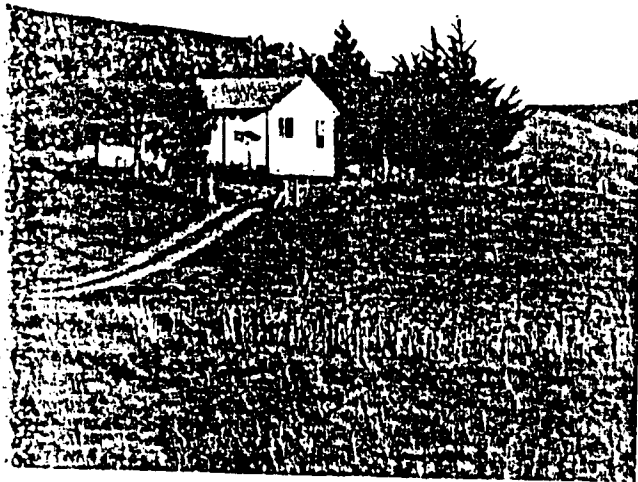
one has lived more than
few seconds in mind
Cobb or Teller —

Youngman's mind leads to
possible delayed - fuse one-liners,
fatal within few days of return:

"Mind traveler, you are a sick man!"

"Yes, but I was a second
opinion - Okey, being ugly too!
"Ah ha ha ha..."

Mind of Lewis Carroll also
forbidden - This mind the only
one into which traveler went
and NEVER CAME BACK!



The Greville monastery, scene of the inspiration

A NOTE ON THE MAKING OF MINDWHEEL

THE STORY OF MINDWHEEL WAS WRITTEN WHILE THE AUTHOR was living in a monastery in eastern Montana, under a strict vow of silence which he had maintained for four years.

*During a period of fasting and intense meditation, the author one night beheld the "story" — or, since it has infinite sequences rather than one, the "world" — of his work in a vision. He began writing in a frenzy, and within hours had covered the pages of his journal. He continued writing on the walls and floor of his cell, and three days later, just as the sun rose, he finished the final passages, with the words *THE END* cramped into the last available corner of the ceiling.*

It took several years for the author to discover computer experts able to implement, through years of innovative work, the grand scheme of those three days and nights of convulsive inspiration.

*The original text of *MINDWHEEL* was reproduced and edited from large-format AccuLens photographs taken by Elk Bailey at the Greville Meditative Order headquarters in Greville, Montana. The negatives were processed and printed by Cruz Associates of Vincente, California.*







ADVENTURER'S DIARY

THE UNIVERSE IN an Electronic Novel is constantly changing. Sometimes things happen too fast for the human mind. You may need some time to consider and some space to take notes, make maps, and otherwise plan your strategy. You may use these pages for that purpose.